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RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 0046
RUEHVL/AMEMBASSY VILNIUS PRIORITY 0020
RUEHWR/AMEMBASSY WARSAW PRIORITY 0050
RHMFIISS/CDR USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BAKU 000792

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FOR EUR/CARC, EUR/UMB, AND EUR/ACE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/25/2017

TAGS: PGOV PREL AJ GG UP MD KZ TX

SUBJECT: BAKU GUAM SUMMIT: LOOKING FOR RELEVANCE

REF: A. BAKU 00287

1B. STATE 83491

1C. BAKU 00693

Classified By: Charge Donald Lu for reasons 1.4 (b, d).

Well-Attended Summit

11. (SBU) The GOAJ hosted the second annual Summit of the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development - GUAM on June 18-19 in Baku. The summit included meetings of GUAM members' heads of state, foreign ministers, national coordinators, and several GUAM working groups. There were also separate GUAM-U.S. and GUAM-Japan meetings. The summit included representatives from several other countries, including EUR DAS Kramer, Bulgarian Vice President Marin, an Estonian Parliamentary member, a Japanese deputy Foreign Minister, Latvian Economics Minister Strods, Lithuanian President Adamkus, Polish President Kaczynski, and Romanian President Basecu. (NOTE: Except for Japan, most if not all of these countries were represented at the May 2006 GUAM summit in Kyiv. MFA sources report that Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan had also been invited. According to the GOAJ, Ashgabat never replied, and while Astana indicated it would send a delegation, it ultimately did not. END NOTE.)

GUAM as a Bridge

12. (SBU) The GOAJ used the summit to highlight GUAM's role as a geopolitical bridge between Europe and Asia. Accordingly, the summit was dubbed "GUAM: Bringing Continents Together." The capstone for the summit was the "Baku Declaration," a document emphasizing GUAM's status as a "full-fledged regional organization" that is a "natural corridor linking Europe and Asia." The document affirms the need to deepen cooperation among members in multiple spheres, while reaching out to other interested states and international organizations. The declaration also highlights GUAM's "deep concern" with the "protracted conflicts" and the need for "strengthening global energy security."

Plenary Highlights

¶3. (SBU) The June 19 plenary session was valuable for understanding the respective members' and observers' positions. Despite the official GUAM position that GUAM is not aimed at any country, several plenary speakers gave thinly-veiled references to Russia's "energy blackmail" or the need to protect their sovereignty after being dominated by a larger state. Many of the European representatives emphasized their willingness to play a "bridging" role for GUAM members with the EU. Polish President Kaczynski appeared to be given the position of honor among non-GUAM member participants (he was the first non-member to be given the floor after the member heads of state gave their statements). Kaczynski's comments also appeared to be some of the most supportive of the European representatives, focusing on Poland's (1) interest in partnering with GUAM to receive oil through the Brody-Odessa pipeline and (2) desire to be a "loyal partner and ally," especially in GUAM's relations with the EU. (NOTE: Per ref A, Poland has sought to deepen its outreach to Azerbaijan in the past months. END NOTE.) Several other speakers--including President Aliyev--focused on the importance of energy and energy security for GUAM.

Results of U.S.-GUAM Meeting Limited

¶4. (SBU) Unfortunately, there was little substance to the U.S.-GUAM bilateral meeting. While the GOAJ was grateful for DAS Kramer's presence and the Secretary's letter, the meeting was spent haggling over the details of the joint statement, which the Azerbaijani MFA had failed to coordinate until minutes before the meeting. The GUAM Foreign Ministers

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effectively "tag-teamed" the document in a coordinated effort, each pushing for a different aspect. Drawing on ref B, DAS Kramer stressed the importance of empowering GUAM's new Secretariat and Secretary-General, as well as the importance of fully realizing existing projects such as the Virtual Law Enforcement Center (VLEC) before taking on new ones.

Comment

¶5. (C) This Summit ended with GUAM as a self-described "full-fledged" regional organization. GUAM's first Secretary-General, Valery Chechelashvili is

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departing--imminently if not already--for Kyiv, empowered to discuss GUAM programs with other countries on behalf of the member states. We are eager to see how the GOAJ will handle its yearlong GUAM presidency. Per ref C, the key MFA office director responsible for GUAM told us Azerbaijan wants to assess the efficacy of GUAM's VLEC and explore new means to facilitate trade and transportation among GUAM members. Azerbaijan certainly has resources it could devote to increasing the level of activity of the organization. The question is whether Azerbaijan will show the leadership. While establishing the secretariat was a promising and necessary step, the organization still needs to follow through with concrete actions in order to become more than just a talk shop.

¶6. (U) DAS Kramer was unable to clear this cable prior to departure.

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